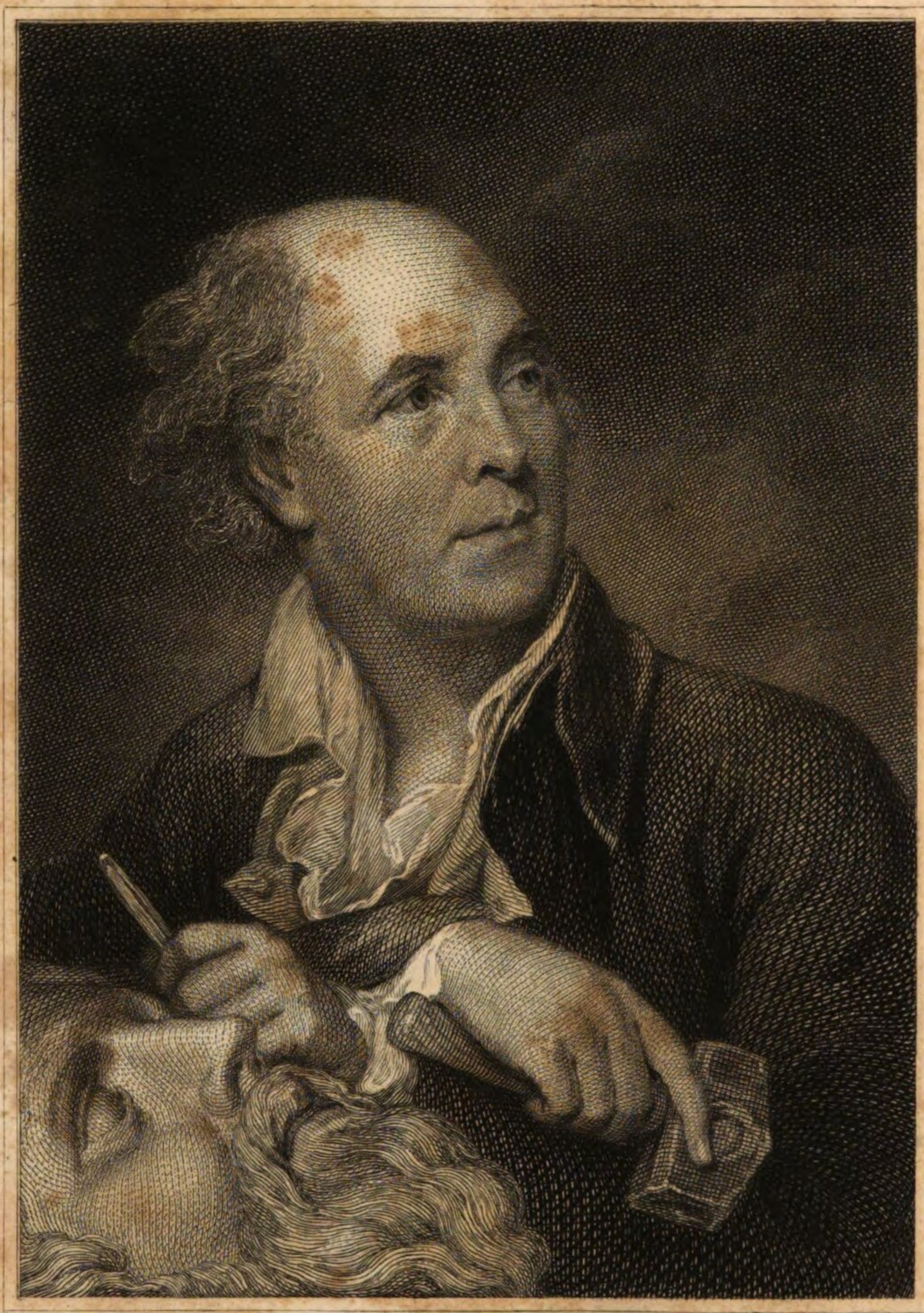


Biogr.

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Painted by I. Russell R.A. Crown Painter to His Majesty

Engraved by I. Collyer A.R.A. Engraver to Her Majesty.

JOHN BACON ESQ.^R. R.A.

MEMOIRS
OF
JOHN BACON, Esq. R.A.

WITH
REFLECTIONS
DRAWN FROM A REVIEW OF HIS
MORAL AND RELIGIOUS CHARACTER.

Non sine ratione, sacra est magnarum virtutum memoria:
et esse plures bonos juvat, si gratia bonorum non cum ipsis
eadat. SENECA.

BY RICHARD CECIL, A. M.
Minister of St. John's Bedford Row, &c.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR F. AND C. RIVINGTON, ST. PAUL'S
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1801.

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MEMOIRS

JOHN W. F. H. H. H.

REFLECTIONS

ON THE

CHARACTER OF THE

THE

THE

THE

PRINTED FOR

BY

1801

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Staatsbibliothek
München

ADVERTISEMENT.

SOON after the death of the late Mr. Bacon, his family requested the Author of the present publication to insert a few memorials of their invaluable relation in the Gentleman's Magazine for Sept. 1799. They have again requested him to publish them in the present form. They wish to preserve, by every means, a memory so revered and beloved, not only by themselves, but also by many who were happy in his acquaintance: they also feel that the high cause of Religion and Morality may be served by the knowledge and remembrance of such a character.

A request at once so rational and pious would have been attended to sooner, had not a long course of painful infirmity and disease rendered even a small undertaking difficult to the Writer.

Some

Some additional facts and anecdotes furnished by the family enable the Author to enlarge the former brief narrative: he has also inserted whatever he could recollect of Mr. B.'s habits in society, turn of thinking, manner of expression, &c. This addition will not only more distinctly mark his character, but afford a gratification to his friends.

The scantiness of his other materials has allowed the Author to dwell longer on that part of his friend's character which is decidedly the most important; and to add those observations at the conclusion on the nature and effect of true religion, which receive from it so striking an exemplification.

MEMOIRS
OF
JOHN BACON, Esq.

TO encourage real Genius, struggling against early disadvantages; to prove the solid benefits of a steady Probity; and, above all, to exemplify the divine maxim, that *Wisdom is justified of all her children*, the following short Memoirs of the late John Bacon, Esq. are presented to the public.

This celebrated Sculptor was descended from an ancient family in Somersetshire: his Grandfather John Bacon was the Son of William Bacon, who possessed a considerable estate near Mansel in that county. His Father Thomas Bacon was

a cloth-worker in Southwark, where Mr. Bacon was born November 24th, 1740.

Providence seems to have peculiarly favoured his infancy; for when he was about five years of age, he fell into the pit of a Soap-boiler, and would have perished, if a man, who then entered the yard, had not discovered the top of his head, and immediately drawn him out. About the same time he fell before a cart, the wheel of which went over his right hand, and must have crushed it, had it not fallen between two projecting stones.

There are, perhaps, but few persons who cannot recollect some impending dangers from which they have been snatched by a particular Providence. Such recollections not only become a duty with respect to our great Deliverer, but experience confirms the very beneficial tendency they have in affecting the heart, and pointing out its deep and various obligations.

When

When very young, Mr. B. discovered an inclination for drawing, common to children; but not pursuing it, he never made any great proficiency in that art.

He, indeed, at that time was obliged to seek a support in the humblest station, but even while a child, seeds of his future growth and eminence appeared. "I have often heard him mention" says his son, "that, when a boy under the age of ten years, and playing at marbles or other games, his thoughts have been chiefly employed in the enquiry, "whence arose the satisfaction he "felt?" and perceiving the weakness of its principle, his former pleasure has been turned into contempt towards himself and his companions, as the easy dupes of fancy.—At this age, he concluded that happiness was in every man's power who could learn to discipline his own mind; and on this plan he made a sort of philosophical attempt to command his own happiness.

It, perhaps, need not be said that Bacon, the old Christian, excelled Bacon the young Philosopher in his attempt to obtain true happiness; and we may add that infant Philosophers will attain to the *summum bonum* as soon as aged ones who are not taught to look to a better resource than themselves.

In the year 1755, and at the age of fourteen, Mr. B. was bound apprentice to Mr. Crispe of Bow Church Yard; where he was employed, among other things, in painting on porcelain. Mr. Crispe had a manufactory of china at Lambeth, to which Mr. B. occasionally went, and where he assisted. His then occupation, indeed, was but a feeble step towards his future acquirements, as he was chiefly employed in forming shepherds, shepherdesses, and such small ornamental pieces; yet, for a self-taught artist to perform even works like these with taste, and, in less than two years, form (as he did) all the models for the manu-

manufactory, was to give an indication of no ordinary powers. But as goodness of heart excels greatness of parts, a proof of his filial affection ought here to be recorded: at this early period he principally supported his parents by the produce of his labours, even to the abridging himself of the necessaries of life.

Let children learn, not only from God's word, but also from facts like the present, how a dutiful and affectionate regard to their parents is marked by HIM on whom all events depend. It is sowing the seeds of future blessings—It is laying a good ground of expectation respecting their own children. *Honour thy Father and Mother, that it may be well with thee.*

Mr. B.'s capacity, however, for greater things in his art than he had yet attempted, discovered itself on the following occasion: in attending the manufactory at Lambeth, he had an opportunity
of

of observing the models of different Sculptors which were sent to a pottery on the same premises to be burnt. Small circumstances often give rise to the most important events in our lives. From the sight of these models, Mr. B. first conceived a strong inclination for his future profession. He applied himself to this attainment with the most unremitting diligence; his progress was as rapid, as his turn for it was sudden and unpremeditated. This will appear from the books published annually by the Society for the encouragement of Arts; where it may be found, that, between the years 1763 and 1766 inclusive, the first premiums in those classes, for which he contended, were no less than nine times adjudged to him. The first of these attempts was made in the year 1758, in a small figure of Peace, after the manner of the antique.

It was during Mr. B.'s apprenticeship that he formed a design of making
Statues

Statues in Artificial Stone, which he afterwards perfected. By these exertions, he recovered the manufactory at Lambeth now carried on by Mrs. Coade; and which, before Mr. B. undertook the management of it, had fallen into very low circumstances.

About the year 1763, Mr. B. first attempted working in marble; and having never seen that operation performed, he was led to invent an instrument for transferring the form of the model to the marble, (technically called, *getting out the points*) which instrument has since been used by many other Sculptors in England and France. Its advantage, beyond the instruments formerly employed, consists in its certainty and exactness—in its taking a correct measurement in *every direction*—in its occupying so small a compass as not to encumber the workman—and, that it may be transferred either to the model, or to the marble, without

without having a separate instrument for each, as before was the custom.

At this time Mr. B. lived in the City, where his family connexions were, but in the year 1768 he removed to the west-end of the town; and it was then (being about twenty-eight years of age) in attending the Royal Academy, instituted that year, that he received his first instructions in his future profession; having never before seen the art of Modelling or Sculpture regularly performed.

In the following year, the gold medal for Sculpture, the first ever given by that Society, was decreed to Mr. B. He became an Associate of that body in the year 1770. His reputation was now well established by the exhibition of his Statue of Mars; it recommended him to the notice of the present Archbishop of York, who having designed to place a bust of his present Majesty in the Hall of Christ Church College, Oxford, presented

Mr.

Mr. B. to the King, who was pleased to set to him for that purpose.

Mr. J— an old acquaintance of Mr. B. heard Mr. West, the present president of the Royal Academy, say, when he saw the model of Mars (Mr. B.'s first Statue), "If this is his first essay, what will this man attain to when he arrives at maturity?" The same friend also remembers, that when Mr. B. was modelling the bust of His Majesty, the King asked him "if he had ever been out of the kingdom?" Upon being answered in the negative, his Majesty said, "I am glad of it—you will be the greater honour to it."

Mr. B.'s execution of this work, added to the fame he had already acquired, procured him the Royal Patronage, and he received an order from His Majesty to prepare another bust, intended as a present to the University of Göttingen. Her Majesty was also pleased to give directions for a third; and Mr. B. has since executed a fourth, which was placed in
the

the meeting-room of the Society of Antiquaries. He was soon afterwards employed by the Dean and Fellows of Christ-Church in forming several busts for them, particularly those of the late General Guise, the Bishop of Durham, and the Primate of Ireland.

In 1773 he presented to the Society for the encouragement of Arts, two Statues in plaister, which, by a vote of that Society, were directed to be placed in their great room. On this occasion Mr. B. addressed a letter to them in the following terms:

“ The honour you have done me, in
“ your acceptance of my Statue of Mars
“ and Venus, affords me an opportunity
“ which I gladly embrace, of acknowledg-
“ ing the many obligations I have to the
“ Society. It was your approbation
“ which stimulated, and your encourage-
“ ments which enabled me, to pursue
“ those studies which a disadvantageous
“ situation had otherwise made difficult,
“ if

“if not impossible. Believe me, Gentle-
“men, I never think of the Society with-
“out gratitude, and without the highest
“idea of the principles on which it is
“formed; and which justly place it
“among the institutions that do honour
“to human nature,—raise the glory of
“a nation,—and promote the general
“good of mankind.”——To this letter
the Society sent a polite answer, accom-
panied with their gold medal, on the
reverse of which is inscribed, EMINENT
MERIT.

His first *work* in Sculpture is in Christ-
Church College already mentioned; the
first *Figures* he executed in marble, are
at the Duke of Richmond's at Godwood;
his first *Monument* is that of Mrs. Wi-
thers in St. Mary's, Worcester.

In the year 1777 he was employed to
prepare a model of a monument to be
erected in Guy's Hospital, Southwark, to
the memory of the Founder. It was this
work that chiefly recommended him to
the

the execution of Lord Chatham's Monument in Guildhall. This latter gave such general satisfaction, that he was presented with a handsome gratuity after the sum agreed for was paid.

The next year, in which he became a Royal Academician, he finished the monument of Mrs. Draper. About the same time he began a marble Statue of Mars from the model he had before exhibited; the commission was given him by Charles Anderson Pelham, now Lord Yarborough; but it was not compleated till the year 1786. Some time in this year (1780) he executed the two groups for the top of Somerset house, and also the Monument of Lord Hallifax, placed in the north aisle of Westminster Abbey.

In the year 1781, he began the Statue of Judge Blackstone for All Souls College, Oxford; and the next year that of Henry the Sixth for the Anti-Chapel at Eton.

There

There was something so singular in the manner in which he received the order for this Statue, that I hope to be excused if I mention the detail. A Gentleman called upon Mr. B. who appeared like a distressed Clergyman applying for relief. The great respect which he had for persons of that description, and the satisfaction he felt in relieving them, induced him, with his usual complacency, to ask this stranger to enter and be seated.—He had not continued long before he began to ask, “ Pray Mr. B. have you “ been at Rome ? ” —Mr. B. answered in the negative. “ I suppose you have been “ at Wilton, to see the antiques there ? ” —No.—After two or three more such questions and answers, he said with his patience almost exhausted, “ Have you “ ever been at Westminster Abbey ? ” On Mr. B.’s replying yes; the Stranger said, “ I may, however, as well walk to your “ rooms, and look at your works.” He examined them attentively, saying as he passed,

passed, "Well—very well—excellent—
"and all this produced without going
"abroad!—But I can tell you one thing,
"and that is, you have no *need* to go."
He then gave an order for a bust of
Henry the Sixth for Eton College, and
paid down half the price.

After this was executed, he wrote a
polite letter of approbation, saying he
had but one fault to find with the per-
formance, which was, that it was not
carried down to the feet, (or a whole
length). Soon after he called again on
Mr. B. and informed him that he had
left a sum of money in his will for a sta-
tue of the above-mentioned King to be
placed in the Chapel of Eton College;
"But," said he, "upon second thoughts,
"it seems I had better have it done while
"I live; and you should set about it im-
"mediately, but that I know your custom
"is to have half the sum paid down at
"giving the order; now this is not quite
"convenient to me at present; but I think
"I could

“I could let you have 100l.”—“Pray, Sir,” said Mr. B. “don’t let that be a consideration—you have always shewn yourself a man of honour—I shall leave every thing to your convenience, and make the design directly.”—“I think,” said the Gentleman, after a pause, “I can let you have 200l. ;” after thus demurring, he paid down the whole customary deposit before he left the house.

In the year 1783 the inhabitants of Jersey, having determined to perpetuate the memory of the gallant Major Pierfon, who fell in the defence of that Island against the French, the execution of the Monument was committed to Mr. B.

It may here be remarked, that in the different competitions with rival artists, Mr. B. has been almost always successful; there being but *one* exception out of sixteen instances.

Of the works which Mr. B. exhibited at the Royal Academy, the following may be enumerated: Statues of Mars
and

and Venus;—a colossal bust of Jupiter;—a colossal Statue of the Thames;—several small figures in marble; and a monument since placed in the Cathedral of Bristol, to the memory of Mrs. Draper, celebrated by Sterne under the name of Eliza.

When Mr. B. exhibited his Statue of the Thames just mentioned, it was noticed by a certain great Personage, who after having expressed her admiration of it as a work of Art, enquired “why he
“could not avoid making it so frightful
“a figure?” He replied, “*Art* could not
“always effect that which was still within
“the reach of nature—*the union of*
“*beauty and majesty.*”

But the most important work hitherto presented to the publick by Mr. B. is the Monument of the Earl of Chatham, erected in Westminster Abbey. This was begun in the year 1778, and finished in 1783. It may perhaps be produced as an instance, not only that
true

true genius is the growth of the British Isle, but that it may be fully ripened in it, unassisted by foreign aid.

When young, Mr. B.'s abilities as an Artist were not called in question, except with respect to the Antique; of which some affirmed that he understood nothing. On this occasion he modelled his large head of Jupiter Tonans, which was inspected by several eminent connoisseurs, and mistaken for a fine antique: they even enquired "from what temple abroad it had been brought?"

Of his different works, it is not the design of these Memoirs to present a regular list, and much less to enter into a critical investigation of their respective merits*. They are before the public, who hitherto have marked them with a distinguished approbation: and they will

* I have inserted some observations of this kind from a recent publication in the note (C) at the conclusion.

be accompanied through future ages with the applause of a Poet*, the productions of whose genius will probably be admired till that period at which it will be said "Time shall be no longer."

I was, however, surpris'd at being assured by Mr. John Bacon, jun. that his father never used to *set his draperies*, as it is termed, at least since the Son could remember; but that they were the production of his own feelings, and of the observations he had made, with scarcely any assistance from artificial arrangements and dispositions of them upon a figure.

Besides the works already mentioned, those which stand among the principal are, The Bronze Group, in the square of

* ————— Bacon there

Gives more than female beauty to a stone,

And Chatham's eloquence to marble lips.

Nor does the chisel occupy alone

The pow'rs of Sculpture, but the style as much.

COWPER.

Somerfet-

Somerfet-house—Lady Miller's, at Bath—Lord Rodney's, at Jamaica—Lord Heathfield's, at Buckland, near Plymouth—Earl and Countess of Effingham's, at Jamaica—Sir George Pocock's and Bishop Thomas's, in Westminster Abbey—Mr. Howard's and Dr. Johnson's, in St. Paul's Cathedral—and the Pediment of the East India house.

Mr. B. had under his hand at the time of his death the following Monuments: that of Mr. Whitbread;—Sir William Jones;—the Poet Maſon;—Rev. Joseph Milner;—General Dundas, for St. Paul's;—Captains Harvey and Hutt, for Westminster Abbey;—a Group for India, containing a colossal Statue of Marquis Cornwallis;—an equestrian Bronze of William the Third, for St. James's Square;—with some others of less importance.

This distinguished Artist, and excellent Man, was suddenly attacked with an inflammation in his bowels, on the evening of Sunday, August 4th, 1799,

which occasioned his death in little more than two days. During this short illness, he expressed a firm reliance on that Sure Foundation on which he had long and consistently built. He departed on Wednesday morning, August the 7th, in the 59th year of his age; leaving two sons and three daughters by his first wife, and three sons by his last, the surviving widow.

Thus departed a man, who though one of the most distinguished Artists of his day, had a mind capable of esteeming this rank but a small attainment. He grasped at the higher honours and unfading rewards which he now enjoys. Amidst the infirmities and temptations to which our common nature is subject, and under which an enlightened eye and a sincere heart led him often bitterly to complain, he was decided in the grand point, and determinately pursued it. He desired to bear his testimony to it after his death; and therefore ordered, by his will,

will, a plain stone, with the following inscription (after the name and date) to be placed over his grave*.

WHAT I WAS AS AN ARTIST,
SEEMED TO ME OF SOME IMPORTANCE
WHILE I LIVED:

BUT
WHAT I REALLY WAS AS A BELIEVER
IN CHRIST JESUS,
IS THE ONLY THING OF IMPORTANCE
TO ME NOW.

Mr. B. was about five feet eight inches in stature, of a fair complexion, and in-

* A similar tablet is now preparing for Westminster Abbey.

teresting countenance, expressive of his natural vivacity, tendernefs, and addrefs.

Though in paffing through this fhort narrative, I could not avoid giving fome general intimations of the character and fentiments of Mr. B. I fhall begin a more particular account of them here, by remarking, that in communicating his ideas, Mr. B. was fometimes forcible and happy; efpecially if the occafion and the affembly demanded care and preparation. I am informed, from the beft authority, that the obfervations he ufed to make at the Royal Academy were received with the greateft attention and deference.

In familiar difcourfe, efpecially when he indulged the metaphyfical turn of his mind, he was frequently circuitous and obfcure: what was fuccefsful, burft, like lightning from a cloud; but, unlike that meteor, it remained to enlighten and to warm. He had a habit of illuftrating his conceptions by emblems and analogies, though he did not much regard the

the accuracy of them; the fertility of his mind for these was peculiar. In attempting to convey a full view of any topic, he would sometimes amplify and wire-draw to tediousness; but the hearer was often well paid at length for his attention by some forcible allusion or comparison, without which he seldom spoke long together. The Reader will perceive this in the passages which, as a specimen of his usual style and manner of speaking, I have put down in these memoirs. So quick, indeed, and lively were his feelings and sympathies, that they were frequently accompanied with his tears.

His talent for illustration, together with his affectionate disposition, made him particularly the friend and favourite of children. He had an equal ability for instructing, and for entertaining them.—Taking some story from the Bible with which the child was acquainted, and putting it into a transposed form, he used to express it in so simple, novel, and lively a manner,

a manner, that the child supposed he was hearing a story intirely new, till he afterwards discovered with surprize that the hero of the story was Joseph, David, &c.

He was naturally irritable, but not at all vindictive; warm in his attachments, but more disposed to lament his wrongs, than to resent them. I do not recollect any one in which I have observed so much natural irritability tempered with such meekness and forbearance. I remember to have seen his temper greatly tried in two instances; the first of these was a most unprovoked insult; the exemplary patience with which it was received, was remarked with admiration by several persons present: the latter instance produced only a silent grief, being a wound in the house of a friend.

There is another instance told in the family, which, however ridiculous, may serve to mark and contrast two characters. While Mr. B. was walking one day

day in Westminster Abbey, he observed a person standing before his principal work, who seemed to pride himself on his taste and skill in the Arts, and who was exuberant in his remarks.—“This Monument of Chatham,” said he to Mr. B. (whom it is evident he mistook for an ignorant stranger), “is admirable upon the whole, but it has great defects.”—“I should be greatly obliged,” said Mr. B. “if you would be so kind as to point them out to me.”—“Why here,” said the Critic, “and there—do you not see?—bad—very bad,” at the same time employing his stick upon the lower figures with a violence that was likely to injure the work.—“But,” said Mr. B. “I should be glad to be acquainted *why* the parts you touched are bad?” He found, however, nothing determinate in the reply, but the same vague assertions repeated, and accompanied with the same violence. “I told Bacon,” said he, “repeatedly
“ of

“ of this, while the Monument was forming.—I pointed out other defects, but
“ I could not convince him.”—“ What
“ then, you are personally acquainted
“ with Bacon?” said Mr. B. “ O yes,”
replied the stranger, “ I have been intimate
“ mate with him for many years.”—“ It
“ is well for you then,” said Mr. B. taking
leave of him, “ that your friend Bacon
“ is not now at your elbow, for he
“ would not have been well pleased at seeing
“ his work so roughly handled.”

It is the reward of sound character, that however it may be obscured by calumny or accident, time will bring forth its reality, and oblige even enemies to acknowledge it. This was verified in the probity of Mr. B. Those who a long time felt it their interest to sink his rising reputation, have afterwards been glad to appeal to his tried integrity.

The following anecdote I received from Mr. B.'s family, authenticated by part of a correspondence now before me.

Not

Not long after the erection of the Monument of the Earl of Chatham, a rival Sculptor (whose name I desire to omit) requested Mr. B. with other Sculptors to value some work which that Artift had executed, as the price demanded had been objected to by his employer. Mr. B. gave an estimate of the value, which much disappointed the expectations of the Sculptor; he took fuch offence at this, as led him to bring the fubject into the news-papers, accusing Mr. B. of the higheft injuftice, and that with the moft opprobrious epithets. Nor did this Artift ftop at representing Mr. B. as a very bad man, but endeavoured alfo to depreciate feveral of his public works. Yet ftrange to tell, this very man, on a future fimilar occafion, applied again to Mr. B., begging his pardon for all that had paffed, and confeffing that he confidered Mr. B. as a perfon upon whose juftice, integrity, and candour, he could rely with the moft implicit confidence.

Persons

Persons who were utterly averse from Mr. B.'s views as a christian, yet placed unlimited confidence in him as an honest man. Mr. Ryley was an ingenious draftsman who used to work principally for Engravers, as may be seen by his name at the bottom of many modern plates. He also executed finished drawings of Monuments for Mr. B.; but though a professed Deist, and of course one who held in contempt the religious views of Mr. B., yet on hearing Mr. B. accidentally say that he was pressed for a sum of money, he stepped out, and, presently returning, brought Mr. B. a bag containing about 200 guineas, which he would fain have left for Mr. B.'s use. Mr. B. blamed him for keeping so much cash in his house, and after having observed him to appear anxious and melancholy, spoke to him about arranging his affairs; particularly, knowing he had considerable property, Mr. B. urged him to make his will. Mr. R. replied he did not

not know how.—Mr. B. proposed making one for him, which he accepted. On this, Mr. R. after naming a few legacies to relations, appointed Mr. B. his executor and residuary legatee. Mr. B. however, positively refused this, insisting upon it, that his property should go entirely to his relations; but, at any rate, that nothing should come to himself. The event of Mr. R.'s death proved that the property, thus honourably refused, was very considerable.

I had many opportunities of observing Mr. B.'s integrity and generosity in giving the merits of rival Sculptors their just demands. He was sanguine in praising any thing felicitous that came from their hands, and seemed to take peculiar pleasure in expressing it. On the contrary, I do not recollect a single instance of his being severe on the defects that might have afforded ample scope for his criticism or wit.

I re-

I remember, in walking with him round Westminster Abbey, that he seemed delighted in pointing out to me such excellencies in the works of different Artists as are not commonly noticed. Among such as are, he warmly joined the public opinion in admiring the exquisite expression of Mrs. Nightingale's sinking in death; and the pathos and dignity of the figure of Eloquence in the Duke of Argyle's Monument. The latter, by its attitude, seemed to bid future artists stand at a distance, and he seemed to think this would be obeyed. I ventured to hint that his figure of Lord Chatham was a copy of it. He said he was quite unconscious of it when he modelled that Statue, but would not affirm that a figure, which he had so long admired, might not have given rise to his idea.

He often remarked on the affectation of many with respect to the antique, who are without taste for selecting what is really excellent in it: "Call it," said he,
"but

“but an antique, and people begin immediately to find some beauty. Look at that figure in the corner of my study —can you see any thing in it?—Yet many who come here, and, at first, take no notice of it, as soon as they hear it is a cast from the antique, they begin to admire!—Had I made it a few years ago, it would not have produced me a shilling.”

He frequently discovered a very modest opinion of his own abilities; I have heard him repeatedly say, “I cannot grasp, much less *arrange*, at one time several ideas.—If I have any thing distinguishing, it is a knack at expressing an idea single, and detached. I stick to my mistress NATURE, and she often lends me her hand.”—“He knew,” observes Mr. Bacon, junior, “where his fort lay; I have heard him often compare himself to the cat in the fable, that had but one sure trick by which to save herself.—He used

“con-

“ continually to inculcate the importance
“ of a man’s attending to that one point
“ in which he discovered his chief talent
“ to lie; and produced himself as an in-
“ stance of the success attending this
“ principle.”

His favourite topic was, the Character of Man, and he often discoursed upon that utter dependance, yet intolerable pride, which is so observable in human nature. “ We are all beggars at best,” said he, “ but are ready to forget it, “ and that is one source of our pride. “ Two beggars stand at a door, the one “ receives a penny, the other a guinea, it “ is well if the latter does not begin to “ imagine some reason for the distinc- “ tion: it is well if he does not swell “ upon it, and turn in contempt upon “ his fellow. Yet this is but a picture “ of a man’s admiration of his gifts.” This view of the matter led him to be ever suspicious of himself, and glad of any hint from his friends.

The

The Reader has, perhaps, observed in some eminent character, that his credit and usefulness have been greatly lessened by a peculiar bad habit or false sentiment which either length of time, or the flattery of fond admirers, or a temper indisposed to animadversion, has at length rendered almost inveterate. The real friends of such a character have therefore despaired of bringing him the common report; or, if such a friendly resolution to serve him has been determined upon, they have been at a loss (like the mice of Æsop proposing a bell for the cat's neck) who should venture to make the desperate experiment.—Nothing of this sort of difficulty, I can fully aver, ever discouraged remark on the character before us: he seemed to feel the reproof of a friend as a token of peculiar friendship. Mr. J—an old and very intimate acquaintance of Mr. B. says, that “his deceased friend was remarkably grateful when told of his faults or deficiencies—that,
D “he

“ he laid a particular injunction upon
“ Mr. J— to mark his conduct and be-
“ haviour in business or company—that,
“ Mr. J— sometimes complied with this
“ request in as-severe a manner as pos-
“ sible—that, he always met with expres-
“ sions of gratitude for his strictures,
“ and could perceive that Mr. B. seldom
“ received his observations in vain.”

He was, indeed, so exquisitely sensible
in point of self suspicion, that it not only
occurred on subjects where he naturally
bowed to the superior knowledge and
judgment of a friend, but on those
where he had himself a decided supe-
riority. Once walking through his pieces,
as I passed a Statue nearly finished, I haf-
tily said, “ Mr. B. that leg is too short.”
He replied, “ Stop, stop,—look again, for
“ it never occurred to me.”—“ Phoh!”
said I, “ I know nothing of the matter:
“ no doubt but you are quite right.”—
“ I don’t know that,” answered he; “ I
“ have taken no other rule of proportion
“ than

“than the measure of my eye, and the re-
“mark of a *fresh* eye is always matter of
“serious consideration with me.”—I
could give other instances of a weightier
kind, which I avoid on account of
being myself so personally concerned
in them, and wish here to confess the
pain I feel in being obliged to speak
so frequently in the first person.

Mr. B.'s habits were frugal, but not
penurious; this statement I feel warrant-
ed to assert, though sensible it has been,
and probably will be, denied. Being fa-
voured by the public with the execution
of most of the principal pieces which
have been done of late, he could not
but acquire considerable property: but
the prudence which, as the father of a
large family, and in a precarious profes-
sion, he deemed it necessary to observe
—the plain and careless style of every
thing about his house—the envy of some
interested contemporaries—and, above all,
the motives of his conduct being greatly

misunderstood, gave occasion to the objections which have been brought against his liberality.

Far be it from the writer to attempt extenuating a vice so odious as covetousness. If it really existed in his friend, or should it be found in his own bosom, he trusts he would appear among the first to expose and condemn it. But, after the strictest investigation, I am convinced that Mr. B.'s memory has suffered injustice in this respect; and therefore I feel it a duty to regard the old admonition,

———— Absentem qui rodit amicum,

Qui non defendit, alio culpante—

Hic niger est.

That there was sometimes the appearance of parsimony cannot be denied; and also, that he has been known to lament a disposition towards it while he dilated, as he frequently did, on the
odiousness

odiousness of the vice. “ He has,” says Mr. B. jun. “ been thought hard and “ irritable when little mistakes have been “ made; but if he was at any time *lit-* “ *tle*, it was in *little things*; for in great- “ er affairs he always manifested a noble “ character of mind. In the year 1793, “ when public suspicion brought ruin “ upon many of the country Banks, and “ shook, to their foundation, several sub- “ stantial ones in town, Mr. B. ventured “ the greatest part of his property in the “ support of one of them; refusing to “ take such a kind of security as he “ knew would put his friend to an ex- “ traordinary expence. He would give “ a considerable sum of money to some “ pious or charitable design on that very “ day in which he would burn his fingers “ by sparing paper in lighting a candle.” It is also well known to some of his friends that, he positively refused to execute Monuments, whenever he judged that
that

that the design or the inscription would have an unchristian tendency.

As I write from conviction, and think it my duty to endeavour to remove what may have been injuriously imputed; so, on the other hand, I am ready to concede that, Mr. B. did not possess that splendour of bounty proportioned to his means, by which some religious characters have distinguished themselves, and put a dignity upon their profession. But a man may have general benevolence, and even largeness of heart, who still is not a THORNTON.

Add to this, Mr. B.'s original circumstances had begotten close habits; they had become even natural to him; and he had from sentiment, and upon principle, a disapprobation of the expensive ones of the present day. His manner of living was that of the last age; and he thought such an example best for a large family among whom his property was

was to be divided. I, however, mention on the best authority, that as he observed his own infirmities, and those of the tender part of his family increase, he had determined soon to enlarge his expences for ease and retirement, as far, perhaps, as christian prudence, and its charitable requirements, would admit.

I just said “he *had* determined,” and so probably have many who will read these Memoirs, and who, like him, have proceeded to opulence by industry: but let them, before it is too late, learn at least from facts which press upon them daily, that the *present* moment only belongs to man.—*Now*, if ever, he can rationally propose to be wise; for

“Where is to-morrow? In another World.”

While, therefore, Mr. B. employed every method to preserve his family from mixing with a dissipated and dangerous world, he strove by every means to render

der their home delightful, and spared no expence that could make it so. He was in his family not only the pious Father, but also the pleasant friend and companion. While he instructed, he entertained; while he restrained, he soothed. In a word, those knew him not who did not know that he was a truly affectionate Husband, a tender Parent, a steady Friend, a loyal Subject, an honest Man, and a real Christian.

I have been able to collect nothing farther concerning him as a Man and as an Artist, but the character of a real Christian last-mentioned, being as rare as it is superior; and as the Author knew him well in this respect, he feels himself bound to speak more largely on this part of his subject.

It does not appear at what time, or by what means, Mr. B. received his first serious impressions. It is said that he descended from religious ancestors. His Father was remarkable (even at that day)

day) for his piety: he seldom sat down to a meal without opening his Bible. But though the son does not seem early to have trod in his father's steps, it is more than probable the father's instructions and example had made a lodgement in the mind of the son.—Children of a real Christian receive more conviction than they generally express. I speak from the experience of my own childhood. There is something forcibly impressive in the course of a godly man; it silently, and at times irresistibly, attacks the heart, when no direct address is made to the ear.

But though I can learn nothing of the history of his mind as to its religious commencement or earlier progress, certain it is, that, for many years before his death, Mr. B. was a bright example to his family and to the world. Whatever defects incident to man might sometime be observed, *this* man's character was unequivocal. His virtues were *real*; they
grew

grew from a root, and that root was Christianity. In this, he was decided. Religion, with him, was not the Sunday coat of a formalist; much less was it the vile cloak of a hypocrite. It was neither a system of mere opinions, nor the cant of a party; but a change of heart, and a hope full of immortality, grounded alone on the *work of a Redeemer*. Occupied with business, exalted by favour, and tempted with wealth, Religion still was his grand concern. Animated by this, his family dwelt in a house of daily prayer and spiritual instruction. He even used to visit his workmen when sick, and discourse with them on the important subject that lay nearest his heart: in some instances, where he deemed it proper, he prayed with and for them at their bed-side.

For though he plainly foresaw that vital godliness must meet those Stigmas with which the thoughtless or the formal agree to brand every man who dares to differ

differ from themselves; and though he knew that one rising into publicity must especially lay his account for them,—(a consideration, however, which has made some to shrink, and even tremble, who might have been supposed quite superior to the ignorance and malevolence of such attacks), yet feeling the alternative before him extreme, and the object infinite, he determined to yield up no essential truth, nor make any temporising concession in order to humour the blind, or flatter the proud. As the reader may wish to enquire what truths he deemed so essential, take a specimen of the manner as well as the matter of them.

“ I find I can know but little of even
“ the world before me; nor can I inde-
“ pendently take a single step in it safely;
“ what then can I do with respect to the
“ *next* world without my bible? I find
“ myself, indeed, in the midst of a system
“ of deep moral disorder, and perpetual
“ vicissitude :—If I listen to the Philo-
“ sophers,

“ fophers, I hear them obtruding ten
“ thousand opinions which only tend to
“ prove each other a fool. Besides which,
“ none of them offers any thing that
“ *meets*, and much less that *relieves* my
“ case. One cheering light only shines
“ into this our moral darknefs. It fhews
“ me the holy law I ought to obey, and
“ declares my true character as a trans-
“ gressor from the womb. I feel that
“ very depravity and weaknefs in my
“ nature which it describes. I have erred
“ and strayed like a lost sheep, and feel
“ no health in me. In such a state, dare
“ I venture my soul upon conjectures
“ and probabilities? Once, indeed, I was
“ *driven* to “ lay hold on the only hope
“ set before me” in the Gospel, from im-
“ perious necessity; but since, I feel
“ *drawn* to embrace it for its excellence.
“ If infinite wisdom, holiness, power, and
“ love, unite in appointing my ransom
“ only through a Saviour on his cross,
“ God forbid that I should glory save in
“ that

“ that alone. There I see the perfections
“ of God harmonised—his law magnified
“ —the evil of sin exposed. I see the
“ worth of the soul—the vanity of the
“ world—and the grace and grandeur
“ of the gospel. With a dispensation
“ so suited to my condition, can I hesi-
“ tate? I tremble at the thought of
“ being found negligent under a consti-
“ tution in which God the Father is wil-
“ ling to become my father; God the
“ Son my redeemer; God the Spirit my
“ guide, sanctifier, and comforter. Be-
“ sides which, in this high and warrant-
“ ed friendship I find not only *motive*
“ but *strength* for proceeding soberly,
“ righteously, and godlily in this present
“ world, and confidence to assuredly
“ wait for a better.—I have, as well as
“ others, looked around me for some other
“ standing, but find I can abide possible
“ consequences upon no lower ground.
“ I will, therefore, neither be frowned
“ nor flattered out of a privilege of
“ which

“ which I am so distinctly conscious.

“ A man may as well tell me I never

“ received nourishment from bread, nor

“ light nor warmth from the Sun ! Ve-

“ rily it is Christianity or nothing, or

“ worse than nothing*.”

Mr. B.'s sabbaths were consecrated to God. On those days, if any particularly *insisted* upon seeing him, they were admitted; but commonly they went away, whatever their rank in life, in a short time; finding the only business they could transact with him then was to obtain part of a sermon. This, however, he managed with such address, that his friends generally left him in perfect good humour. For though he often expressed his high disapprobation of some religious characters who mistake their disgusting rudeness for godly zeal, and their savageness of manner for faithful dealing, he

* More of his sentiments of this kind may be seen in the Letters placed at the conclusion.

was

was firm and inflexible in the defence of the truth upon every proper occasion. Two or three authentic anecdotes will help me to convey a more exact idea of his sentiments and conduct on such occasions.

A Baronet, who is still living, and who was examining his works, perceived among them a bust of the late Rev. Mr. Whitfield. "Mr. B." said he, "after all that has been said, this was a truly great man—he was the founder of a new religion."—"A new religion, Sir?" replied Mr. B.—"Yes," said the Baronet, "What do you call it?"—"Nothing," replied Mr. B. "but the *old* religion revived with *new* energy, and treated as if the preacher really *meant* what he said."

While Mr. B. was remarkably pleasant in society, he was often mortified at meeting the insipid and trifling turn which conversation generally takes, even in what is called the best company.—

This,

This, indeed, is a general confession, yet few have courage or ability sufficient to stem the shallow, babbling torrent in its unmeaning course. Mr. B., however, generally kept upon the watch for an opportunity at which some rational, if not religious, subject, might be introduced. Upon such an occasion, he made (but quite opportunely) a religious remark to a Lady who sat next him. "As to that, Mr. B." said she, "my religion is to fear God and keep his commandments; so we will talk no more of such matters."—"But, Madam," replied Mr. B. "you will recollect that it is said, "They that feared the Lord *spake often* one to another."

At the time he was putting up the Monument of Lord Chatham, a minister, to whom Mr. B. was an utter stranger, was walking through the Abbey, and coming unseen, tapped Mr. B. on the shoulder, saying, "Take care what
"you

“you are about—you work for eternity,” (alluding to the story of Zeuxis.) It happened the next morning, that Mr. B. heard this gentleman deliver a discourse from the pulpit, and watching him in his passage to the vestry, he came behind him, and tapping him in a similar manner, said, “Take care what *you* are about—you work for eternity.”

But Mr. B. was a Christian upon a larger scale than many whose piety is too much confined to their own heart, and those of their family and friends. His mind was continually on the wing to counteract the desperate attempts made, particularly for years past, to overturn Church and State, Order and Godliness. For though, from violent publications which he had read, he feared that the indiscrimination and misrepresentation of some loyalists would tend more to bring a good cause into disgrace than the craft or violence of its bitterest enemies; yet he still abhorred from his heart the

E spirit

spirit of the Jacobins. “These fellows,”
said he, “are famous at the pick-axe—
“They can quickly pull down a Palace,
“but cannot build so much as a Shed.
“—They affect to illuminate the world,
“but it is by the light of a conflagration
“which discovers nothing but the deso-
“lation it spreads. Their disorder is
“treated as *new*, but it was always in
“human nature, and, under new cir-
“cumstances, this disease, which for-
“merly lay more hid, is now *come out*
“*upon the skin*: or, like a thief in the
“house, the villain *filched* before; but
“being joined to a band, he says, *will*
“*ye go with us and rob?*—Wise men,
“however, may learn much from this
“evil: among other things, they may
“see what sin is when it is ripe:—it
“may be nipt in its growth by a frost,
“but in its season, it is rank. It will
“in the end shew, that however this
“Philosophism may serve for *talking*, it
“is

“is nothing for *doing* — except mischief.”

Above all, he lamented that persons making a serious profession of religion, should be found attempting even to palliate that spirit of insubordination which had already taken such portentous strides, and still threatens to overturn Europe: or that such persons should not perceive how utterly the genius of Christianity opposes such a restless spirit; and, calling the attention of its children to nobler objects, leaves “the pot-
“herds to strive with the potsherds of
“the earth.”

His warm attachment to the cause of real religion led him also to grieve, and sometimes to burn, at the offences and impositions which occasionally arise in connection with the religious world. Infidels insist upon it that we are a motley group of knaves and fools, and the freaks of some wild or false characters, which are found among us, are brought forward

in proof of it. They choofe to forget that of the pureft fociety which ever appeared upon earth, it could be faid, “*Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a Devil?*” It muft needs be that offences come: and wherever religion fpreads, impoftors and fanatics of various forts will take advantage, as mountabanks do from the gathering of a crowd.

Mr. B., however, keenly felt fuch abufes. He wifhed a religious profef-
fion to be kept fober, clean, and tranf-
parent.—“What,” faid he, fpeaking of
a modern impofition, “What have
“Christians to do with things fufpicious
“or equivocal?—We have too much to
“do with fubftantials to dabble in every
“*hocus pocus* that knaves are ready
“enough to invent, and of which even
“good men are fometimes the dupes!
“—Turn afide, fays one, and I will fhew
“you a thing!—No:—it is not worth
“while—I have feen too many punches.
“and

“and puppet shews already.—Take my
“poker, says another, it is excellent for
“your purpose;—yes; but the other end,
“perhaps, may be red hot!”

“There,” added he, “is that Brothers
“with his prophecies! Should one have
“thought that any body could have
“been found weak enough to attend to
“the nonsense of such a man?—But the
“truth is, it is *any thing* with the World,
“and *any thing* with the Devil, but Faith
“and Repentance.”

Thus, while too many were increasing
the national troubles by ill-timed charges
and complaints, Mr. B. felt grateful, and
sometimes expressed admiration, that
things were found upon the whole so
well, and that, when, on account of
abounding wickedness under special pri-
vileges, so much heavier a scourge might
have been expected, it fell so compara-
tively light. He accordingly joined li-
berally in the public subscription for the
use of Government at the Bank, and
armed

armed his Sons and workmen. He was, indeed, ever ready by his influence and property, to institute and support whatever tended to promote and to secure the best interests of mankind. Hence, the strenuous and successful effort he made at the institution of the Sunday Schools to preserve the Lord's day from secular employments, and which he deemed the most important thing he ever did.—Hence, his prompt attention to the various applications made to him for assistance in religious and charitable designs—and, hence his employing his leisure moments in composing popular moral and religious pieces, by which the public mind might be corrected or improved.

I well remember his being deeply interested in promoting a favourite design he had conceived just before his death; it was the forming a literary society, whose object it should be to oppose works of an irreligious and erroneous

neous tendency by a periodical publication.

An extract from a letter which I received from him at that time will best describe his zeal in this design.

“ I feel myself incompetent to the
“ scheme my head runs upon, and espe-
“ cially the last with which I have been
“ amusing my friends. I am so completely
“ humbled, that I seem to be ready to
“ teach the Horn-book with the Old
“ Woman’s knitting needle. Mr. —,
“ who sees much farther than I can,
“ seems to have dropt it, I conclude, as
“ impracticable, for I cannot doubt that
“ his spirit is congenial to the design. I
“ see I have grasped at too much, but
“ I am willing to let go my hold to
“ take up what may be more prac-
“ ticable.—I am exceedingly low spirited
“ about it; full of the design, my ima-
“ gination painted a scene which my
“ dim sight almost took for real archi-
“ tecture; but I soon recollected how
“ vain

“vain every contrivance was without
“the divine sanction and blessing.”

As to his literary attainments, it is rather to be admired, considering his early disadvantages and arduous professional occupations, that he arrived at mediocrity in letters, than that he should not attain to excellence. Yet, whoever reads what he wrote under the article **SCULPTURE** in Dr. Rees's edition of Chambers's Dictionary, will form no mean opinion of his attainment in this respect. As few possess that large work, I have added the ingenious disquisition which follows the history of the Art under the note (B) annexed to these Memoirs.

He was also the Author of several anonymous pieces respecting the Arts—of several well written prose epitaphs, one of which was preferred by the King for Lord Chatham's Monument, and on which his Majesty complimented him—and, of a poetical tract, calculated, from
the

the familiarity of its manner, to correct and allay the political ferment that prevailed a few years ago among the common people. To say something popular to this class was the principal ambition he seemed to have in using his pen. He amused himself in putting down hundreds of epitaphs which he hoped might more usefully meet the public eye in a church-yard, than those trite and often ridiculous ones that are usually observed. With the same view he composed a great number of fables, as the ground of the moral and religious sentiments with which he meant to accompany them. They were, however, written in such haste,—generally put down at the moment the thought occurred; and often conceived as he walked the streets, that they are not fit, in their present state, to appear in print: but as a specimen of each will oblige his friends, they will find it at the end of these Memoirs under the note (A.)

A long

A long and intimate acquaintance with the deceased enables the Writer of these Memoirs to speak thus of a once invaluable friend, the loss of whose counsel and example he must deeply feel through life. In his intercourses, he observed the Philosopher and the Sculptor lost in the Believer and the Philanthropist: he heard the *Artist* discourse, but he saw the *Christian* glow: and he now views, with heart-felt satisfaction, the blessings of this eminent character descending upon his children.



THE two following Letters, written to Miss Bacon, I gladly insert, as they will not only serve to confirm the account already given of the subject of these Memoirs with respect to his feelings as a Parent, but also more fully exhibit his sentiments as a real Christian. I make no apology here for any want of accuracy that may be observed in them; since, to examine a private correspondence, like this, with criticism, would betray an inconsideration which it seems vain to attempt correcting.

LETTER I.

MY VERY DEAR CHILD,

I HAVE been seeking for a moment of leisure to acknowledge your very acceptable letter, and now I am resolved to

to seize it. Much I cannot say, much I *need* not say; the Redeemer is soon mentioned, but that Redeemer comprehends all things. I bless his name for what he has done for you, and all my future expectations are from *Him*. Though Mr. —, —, &c. are withdrawn, HE who made them what they were, can fill their place with others, or can do without them. I desire to rejoice on your behalf for the comforts you are favoured with, and, perhaps, I ought to rejoice at your *conflicts* too. Sure I am, you would have less evidence of the reality of a divine work, if you were entirely without them. God obtains honour in supporting you under them; and you acquire patience, experience, &c. by the exercise.

My Dear Child, all mankind have their conflicts: he that is intirely of the world, finds it a world of conflicts, and cannot escape many a wound from it: but the worst of his case is, that he has no Physician to apply to, "*though the sorrow*

row of the world worketh death." What a blessed thing it is, to fight for the *Truth*—for the honour of God—for everlasting Life—to strive for the noblest Prize—to wear celestial Armour—to have free access to that Tree "whose leaves" are for the healing of the nations," and which heal every wound upon the immediate application—to fight with the Captain at our side, and to be *sure* of the victory at last.

Certainly we have a foe subtil and powerful; but in both these respects he is a conquered enemy. It is impossible for me to describe a thousandth part of his stratagems. One general hint I will suggest to you; take the Armour of Righteousness on the *right* hand and on the *left*. There is scarce a temptation but has an opposite one as dangerous. Who can tell which is to be most dreaded, presumption or despair? Either for us to think that God will never punish Sin, or that he will never pardon the peni-

penitent? If we in any degree gain the victory over sensuality, Satan will then tempt us to pharisaism or spiritual pride—there is no end of these opposite temptations—if he cannot keep us from the conscientious performance of duties, he will urge us to a performance beyond our strength, that he may tempt us to despair. From the fatal effects of all which contrary snares, may the blessed Saviour of sinners, my Dear Girl, deliver you.

This is precarious weather for riding—There is no place, my Dear, but Heaven, where it *always* shines.—Well, it is not far off, let us congratulate one another.

Adieu! adieu!

J. BACON.

LETTER II.

MY DEAR CHILD,

Dec. 12, 1792.

I DO indeed most heartily concur with you in the sentiment, that “there is no subject so proper for a letter” from one sinner to another, “as that of *Immanuel*, God with us.” Every other subject depends on the fabrick of our imagination for its importance. Still the votaries of pleasure say, “at least it has a reality, for we feel an interest in it every hour.” We grant it; pleasure is pleasure, from whatever source it arises; and let them make the most of the concession. Truth must allow that the colours in the rising bubble are brilliant, and its motion pleasing; but it has a quality which mocks the joy of its possessor.

feffor. I should have said *had* mocked, for it is gone before I finish the sentence: yet short as its existence is, it had a lesson of immense import; while he has been gazing at it, opportunity, which is ever on the wing, has seized the critical moment and passed by.

I remember to have heard a sensible person say, that "he could never covet the honour of the City's chief Magistrate, because that honour continued only one year." Alas! why had he not risen to grandeur of character sufficient to have made him say the same of seventy years! With what a low ambition is man satisfied! It is enough if he is not the *greatest* fool in the company. But why did I say seventy? When does his felicity last seven? While the animal spirits move briskly, the vision may subsist. "The spirit of man may sustain his infirmity," but a small wound in that spirit annihilates all:
This

This is the moment (and *many such moments there are*) when nothing can apply to our case but the Gospel.

We see the firmest Friendship and the fondest Affection often exerting their utmost efforts in vain: but who can communicate to the spirit of man but he who made it? He that searches the heart alone knows the depth of the malady; and he that probes the wound, alone knows what will cure it. The Balm may be found in Gilead, where the Physician also is; “the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood,” all bear their record in Heaven.

O how happy am I, my Dear Child, that you have *tried* this cordial specific, and that I am not writing to inform you! I write, not because you know not these things, but because you do. This is the wine, the value of which encreases with its age; none, having drank it, desire new, for they say the old is better: this, therefore, is only fit for
F immortal

immortal beings) whose state admits of no other means of satiety.

A fortnight ago, I felt an alarm in my breast, arising from the state of public affairs, and my mind was ruminating upon various means to stem the increasing tide of popular discontent; but suddenly I recollected David's most powerful resource. In the calculation of politicians, all hope was over with David; that army was most numerous which was with Absalom, and he had besides stolen the hearts of the people: he had also a deep and subtle revolutionist in his Camp. David had but one seemingly poor manœuvre left, (one that I believe is never mentioned in all the books of tactics) "*Lord, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.*" Was ever so simple a step? It seemed less efficient to meet a powerful enemy with, than even the sling and the stone; yet it was the very thing, and the only thing too, that effected David's deliverance.

ance. Such a prayer as this was my best confidence, and I have not yet been confounded.

You say not a word about returning, and I know it is not easy for *such* Friends to part; let even your friendship afford a motive for securing a joint inheritance from which you shall never be separated, nor from each other, nor from

Your affectionate Father,

J. BACON.



CONSIDERING the prevailing scepticism of the age, and the various and violent attacks that have been made upon vital godliness, as if uncertain in its nature, and debasing in its tendency; I hope it will not be thought impertinent if, with a view to expose these misrepresentations, I embrace the opportunity which here presents itself, of adding a few general reflections which have occurred to my own mind in contemplating the character of my friend. Both before and since his departure, he has been the occasion of leading me to think on that *Sameness of Principle*, and on that *Superiority of Sentiment* which belong to a religion like his.

I. The IDENTITY or sameness of its principle. What, I have said to myself, is found religious principle?—if it may be discovered by its effects, then, bad as the world is, it is still found passing among
among

among us, though too often an unacknowledged stranger. Look at Bacon. He is naturally sanguine; has exquisite sensibility; he is opulent; he can suffer no ennui for want of an object; he has fame to fan his vanity; and a fancy ever on the wing to amuse his taste. What then is it which, bridling every inordinate propensity, leads him to find his chief enjoyment in administering instruction to the ignorant, and teaching “the young idea how to shoot”—in conversing with a kindred mind on invincible things, or retiring for the pursuit or contemplation of them? I observe such objects can draw him from scenes of science, and grandeur, and pleasure; I have seen him steal moments from the Royal Academy, though then expecting his assistance, to get one more hint for the religious improvement of his head or his heart.

Perhaps he is an enthusiast. Yes; certainly; if by that term is meant one
who

who strongly feels his art, but more strongly feels the object of his heavenly pursuit. But if by the term is meant one who is led on by a heated but delusive imagination, then let us stay a little, and enquire respecting this.

Do such enthusiasts as the latter proceed with humility and fear? Are they rational and consistent in their conduct? Do they explore the ground as they tread, and only advance as they feel it good? Suspicious of themselves, do they incessantly enquire of the best and wisest they know, in order to be directed? Are they glad of a hint? and, however contrary to their feelings or interest, do they implicitly bow to the plain precepts of their Maker in his word?—Yet this did Bacon. Let us, if we would be wise, learn to distinguish between the sound and rational determination of that man who, having dug the field and found the treasure, hides it for joy, and parts with every inferior consideration
for

for it; and the man whose raptures have nothing but the mere figment of a wild imagination for their foundation.

The fact respecting such a strong though rational direction in the mind of man towards heavenly things, however it may raise suspicion in those who have not felt it, is unquestionable among such as have.—To illustrate the subject—I see a small bar of steel in the lid of a box now before me. I see it tremble as if undetermined, yet keep a certain direction. I can cause it to deviate from its point by impulse; but though I can disturb its natural direction, I cannot give it a *new* one: nay, this very disturbance will still more fully discover its inclination; it will put it upon labouring to recover its point; if I cease to agitate, it will soon cease to vibrate, and return to its proper rest. Of this I am clearly conscious, but I am not more conscious of this fact, than I am of another, of which the former may
stand

stand as an emblem. Thousands, as well as myself, know that the polar direction of the steel is not more a matter of fact in the natural world, than the heavenly direction they feel is a fact in the moral world; and that a disposition often observed in men who were once the most reprobate, to “live soberly, “righteously, and godly, in the present “world,” is the proper effect of this influence.

It is not indeed so easy, to describe what passes in the moral as in the natural world. It would not have been possible for Zaccheus to have fully set forth the feelings with which he as readily quitted the gold in his coffers as the tree from which he descended.—Saul could not make the Pharisees or the Philosophers comprehend the nature of that full conviction with which he “counted all “things but as dross for the excellency “of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his “Lord;” nor the evidence he had
that

that it was his highest honour to suffer for his master's sake. Nor could my late friend, after having obtained the approbation of his hearers at the Royal Academy by his observations upon the arts, have clearly conveyed, with those observations, the more interesting ones which he had made, and the perceptions he had felt, in a superior science.

For religion that is vital and experimental, has not only its common faith, but its correspondent feelings:—not only its peculiar objects, but its proper taste; which, like that for the fine arts, we must actually possess, in order to fully comprehend. From which premises two consequences will naturally follow, 1. That a pious man will have stronger evidence of the truth and reality of his religion than he can fully demonstrate to others who are of a contrary character; and 2dly, That he can no more doubt the superiority of his choice and taste, because scorned by incompetent judges, than

than one who had a taste for proportion, or an ear for music, would doubt their existence from their being denied by such as had none.

By this religious principle, therefore, found in all true believers, they not only resemble lines drawn from a wide circumference to a common centre, but, under the operation of an Almighty Spirit, a new and special direction is given to their desires and faculties towards the attainment of their only, their proper, and their appointed rest. By a moral sensation analogous to the natural, they *feel* the vanity and disorder of their present state—They *see* one chief good—They *hear* of one way to it—They *savour* the heavenly proposal—and after receiving a *taste* for THAT, they find every other good comparatively insipid. But is this chief good, or the appointed way to it by a Redeemer, an invention of their own? or a mere tradition of their fathers? On the
the

the contrary, they have irrefragable evidence that they were incapable of forming such an expectation—that man could not imagine it—but, that it is a “hope set before them” by HIM that cannot lie. Now it is this heavenly INFLUENCE they are under, working faith and obedience, that constitutes their peculiar character, and identifies true religion whensoever or wheresoever it is found.

When, therefore, the enemies of such a profession bring forward the stale objection—“What is true religion? For “we find it one thing in England, another in Scotland, a third at Rome, “and often twenty different things in “the same place—Settle this, say they, “among yourselves, before you address “us on the subject.”—We answer, it has long been settled. While you stumble at the supposed *diversity*, we both discern and admire the *identity*. We feel the fullest conviction that real religion

gion in itself, is so far from being a different thing in different places, that it is one and the same thing at all times, and in all places; and that, in those particulars which are absolutely *essential* to it, it will yield to the impositions of no time nor place, or its martyrs had not bled.

In order to understand this, men should consider what real religion is, namely—the heart of fallen man under a divine influence, returning to God through a Mediator.—The Scriptures term this **LIFE**. As the life of the body is one and the same principle in all men, whatever difference be observed in their respective complexions, habits, and forms; so real religion, which is the life of the soul, is one and the same principle of a higher order, indeed, but which equally identifies the subject; and, like the former, it is discerned by the exercise of its proper faculties and acts—it requires the same
almighty

almighty power to maintain as to create it—and is quite distinct from and superior to its accidents, and the circumstances among which it may be found.

For God, who in the first creation “called the light to shine out of darkness,” hath in this new creation “shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,” and thus still continues to perform the most glorious of his miracles, the moral miracle of recovering the heart of an eccentric and exorbitant creature to his Creator.

By this moral change, man is actually recovered to his God, to his neighbour, and to himself. Tell me not of the external forms, and petty circumstantial distinctions with which his education or connections may have prejudiced his mind; they are but as his provincial dialect, his dress, or his complexion. The grand

grand enquiry should be—Is the sinner humble and penitent before his God?—Is he seeking acceptance only through that Redeemer “whom God hath set forth for a propitiation through faith in his blood?”—Is he found walking in a course of holy obedience? If this be really his case, then call such a man by what term of distinction or epithet of reproach you please, still the man is alive to God, and will join his fellow-believers in serving HIM, if not in the same modes, yet to the same ends: in the *matter* of their confessions, petitions, and praises, they will agree, however in the *form* of presenting them they may differ; there will be a *unity*, though not a uniformity; and thus the divine life of true religion, derived from a union with the one living head of the church, will be identified by its essential properties and effects, in whatever Age or Church on earth it is found.

Strip

Strip real religion, therefore, of that which is no essential part of it, or what is only accidental to it, and regard it as described in the Scriptures, and exemplified, though but imperfectly, in the true believer, and then you will find it the same under every dispensation. Thus the same sense of need—choice of good—hope through a Redeemer—and good will to men, dwelt in the hearts of Abraham and of Bacon. The latter could never more exactly express his feelings than in saying

“ with the Patriarch’s joy
Thy call I follow to the land unknown;
I trust in Thee, and know in whom I trust;
Or Life or Death, is equal; neither weighs:
All weight in this—O let me live to Thee!”

YOUNG.

I remember my friend’s saying, after church, on hearing a discourse upon Abraham’s departure—“ In this simplicity of holy aim and of implicit dependence,

pendance, I think ALL the spiritual children of the father of the faithful are perfectly united." I may add too that, in this he was not only a sincere, but enlightened example. If, with the Patriarch, he forsook a corrupt world to go out he knew not whither, yet he knew, like the Patriarch, WHY, and with WHOM he went out.

For any one to tell us, by way of objection, of the various inventions that men have mingled with religion, whether false or true, is only telling in how many ways a puppet may be dressed, or a living man disguised. To such an objector I would say, If you stumble at the pitiable notions and practices of the weak and superstitious, and occupy yourself about the *wood, hay, stubble*, with which such build upon the foundation—or, if you only listen where bodily disorder, accidentally connected with religious impression, utters its wild absurdities, verily you have
your

your reward. In the first instance, you have pursued folly, and caught it; in the second, you have watched infirmity, and discovered that it will wander: you have looked for truth where you should not, and found in its stead what every considerate man would have expected to find. But had you looked further, and where only an indisposition to find real religion, (which, in reality, lies at the bottom of these objections), refuses to look, you would have found such characters as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Job, Abraham, &c. in the first ages of the world; and, afterwards those who, actuated by the same principles, have, until this day, trod in their steps; *then*, indeed, we should have the point in question properly before us—see the religion which is real and true—know how it feels and acts in different places and circumstances—and find that it is essentially the same thing in all.

The same may be said of the sophistry which has been employed to blind the eyes of the ignorant by instances of fraudulence and hypocrisy. In our enquiries upon so important a subject as religion, it is *substance*, and not shadow, that should be regarded;—the *rule*, and not the exception. It would be well, however, if the sophist could be convinced with what sincerity he acts in his industry to accumulate and advance such instances. I would assist him in trying it, by proposing this very plain rule. When you receive your gold, and find, as you have probably found before, that a counterfeit or two has slipped in among it; determine immediately to throw away the rest, as of no value—resolve that no true gold is to be found. But you revolt at this: you love your money, and instantly apprehending the distinction between true and false, you reject the spurious coin, and cautiously treasure up the rest. And why
do

do you not act thus respecting the gold that perisheth not? Alas! the reason is too evident. "Light is come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."

But, while prejudiced minds will be occupied only about accidents and offences in religion; and little minds will magnify the peculiarities of the sect they have joined, as if an essential part of it; and artful men among them, taking advantage of this weakness, will imitate those of old, who cried, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved*:" the Christian of a more enlarged mind and spiritual character (an instance of which appears in my late friend), he firmly maintaining his hold of evangelical truth, but looking beyond the impositions and often frivolous distinctions with which it

* Acts xv. 1.

has been incumbered, he will resolve, with the Apostle, that “*neither* circumcison availeth any thing, nor uncircumcison, but faith that worketh by love*.”

To say nothing more of the grosser stumbling blocks which arise, it seems most devoutly to be wished, that instead of that motley and disfiguring exhibition of christianity which its professors have presented to mankind, one uniform, orderly, and distinguishing aspect of it should only appear. Much that is now offensive and confounding would, doubtless, thereby be removed. The history, however, of eighteen hundred years, shews us how little is to be expected of uniformity, though every Christian seems bound to use his efforts towards maintaining any measure of it. He should also watch over his own heart, lest frivolous scruples or wrong tempers should increase the evil. For schism has

* Gal. v. 6.

not only a deforming and deranging effect wherever it springs up, but it has brought several once flourishing churches to ruin. Still, if we cannot have uniformity, let it be remembered that between unity and uniformity there exists a broad line of distinction, which must not be delivered up to the unbeliever. Uniformity in modes may be the most becoming *dress* of the church, but unity in spirit is the *life* of it. It is this unity of spirit to the living HEAD, and to one another as his living members, which identifies the character of true believers—which constitutes their essential distinction from the rest of mankind, and which abides with them for ever.

“ I will give them, saith God, “ one
“ *heart* and one *way* ;” and he hath fulfilled his promise. The stupid Hindoo—the ferocious American Indian—the degraded African—the cultivated European—the Prince with his sceptre, or
the

the Commander with his truncheon—the Student with his book, or the Artist with his chisel,—though widely distinguished by habits and circumstances, yet when brought to know the distinguishing truths of the gospel, and feel its converting power, are found with one common sympathy to unite in spirit with each other, in expressing the same wants, seeking the same relief, and joining in the same song—“ Worthy is
“ the Lamb that was slain to receive
“ power, and riches, and wisdom, and
“ strength, and honour, and glory, and
“ blessing.”

Let then no sincere enquirer after the chief good be the dupe of the imposing sophistry, and much less be abashed at the rude scoffs of those who have taken no higher rule of judgment than what they see floating on the surface of a gross and multiform profession of christianity; but let him read his BIBLE to learn the substance of that grand design.
There,

There, after contemplating man's original apostacy, let him mark that one living and consecrated way of redemption instituted at the fall, kept in memory by typical shadows, and finished on Calvary. Let him trace the operation of that Spirit of life, which, giving effect to the design, and to that only, produces in man a new and distinct character; "For," as the apostle expresses it, "by one Spirit we are all "baptized into one body, whether we "be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be "bond or free; and have been *all made "to drink into one Spirit.*" A character this, quite distinct from that of the proud, who despise it, the careless, who disregard it, the hypocrite who apes it, or the fanatic who exposes it to contempt.

Placed in the midst of such various misrepresentations, both from avowed

* 1 Cor. xii. 13.

enemies and pretended friends, we can have no security but as our eye is fixed on the infallible standard of truth put into our hands. And as from this we learn that but two final states are appointed, and but two general classes of mankind passing through life towards those states ; our result should be, as an excellent writer most truly, though quaintly expresses it, “ Let the whole “ world be divided into two great “ sects, viz. *Timists* and *Eternalists* *.”

I add a remark which naturally occurs whenever lay-men of eminence are seen to come forward as living evidences of the force of truth ; namely, that the Almighty seems to adopt a method for vindicating his religion, and shewing its identity, by raising up witnesses who cannot be suspected from their professions and circumstances. Such serve to shew that vital religion is not

* Adams's Works, Vol. I. p. 185.

only one holy principle common to them all, but also that such a religion is *practicable* in all circumstances. Avoiding the indelicacy of naming living characters, we may observe that he will have such instances as ROCHESTER among the Peers—HALE among the Judges—GARDINER among the Colonels—BOYLE among the Philosophers—BOERHAAVE among the Physicians—BACON among the Artists, &c. &c.—He will prove, in a word, that it is the *heart* of the irreligious, and not the lawful profession, attended with its peculiar difficulties, which refuses to bend to his counsel and authority; and that to shine forth as lights in the world from one holy flame enkindled in the heart, is to attain the highest style of man, which leads me to speak of,

II. That SUPERIORITY of SENTIMENT which belongs to true religion; and by which is meant, not only the nobler objects it presents, but that elevation

vation and comprehension of mind which it inspires in its sound professors, like my Friend. Christians are bound to assert this in opposition to the debased account given by its enemies; and to insist that, however this "light of life" must humble them as fallen creatures before God, yet it instructs and animates them to rise above the world in which they live, and become superior to their former selves.

This is Order; the man and his concerns take their right place.—It is Elevation; such a one dwells on high.—It is Emancipation; not the pretended one of philosophy which, like the quack, drives the external symptoms of a disease from the skin, and fixes it more deeply in the vitals; and much less is it that of the Enthusiast, who dreams of heavenly gifts and special privileges while he refuses to submit to the order and sanction of a heavenly rule of life. The ascendant spirit which Bacon derived

rived from his religion had no affinity with the pride, self-confidence, and affected singularity of these two characters.

Elegant in his manners, and rational in his mind as a man, diligent and superior as an artist, he dared to differ from the world, as far as that world dared to differ from its God. "Choose ye," said he, by his conduct as well as words, "this day whom ye will serve; but as
"for me and my house, we will serve
"the LORD *."

But in order to estimate the superiority with which true piety elevates a Christian, we must not compare and contrast a christian with men evidently degraded by their vices, but with men in similar situations with his own. Bacon must be placed with men of genius, affluence, and taste; who, surrounded by the choicest productions of the arts

* Joshua xxiv, 15,

they most admire, are deeply interested in them both by their feelings and their fame. We shall then see, not only to what degree pure religion will lift a man above the meaner, but the more refined gratifications. This comparison, however, is not advanced to the prejudice of the arts, as such; but rather to shew the superiority of religion, and the elevating effect it has on the minds of those who pay it that homage it so justly demands. Let every excellence have its just claim and place, for this is but *order*, and that order too which religion itself will sanction. Let us render to genius the things which belong to genius, and to God the things that are God's, and all will be right.

As an Artist, that which Bacon set his hand to, he did with all his might;—as a Philosopher, he smiled at his own pursuits and attainments, and at the admiration and expence which attended them;—but, as a Christian, he could not help pitying

pitying those devotees who seemed absorbed in his performances.—Such of his friends as could comprehend and rightly estimate his sentiments, have frequently known him to express this in a variety of ways. He traced the root of this sad mistake up to the fall of man, who possessing, in his alienated state, no more valuable consideration in hand or in prospect, spends his thoughts and money “for that which is not bread*.” Man in his maturity, like man in his infancy, feeling nothing substantial whereon his heart can rest, follows his tired fancy from object to object, and in his way calls upon the Artist to help him. “Upon what principle then,” said I to him, “do you continually labour to meet the taste of such fickle wanderers?”—“I consider,” said he, “that profession in which I am provisionally placed, and prosperously and

* Isa. lv. 2.

“honour-

“ honourably succeeded, to be as law-
“ ful as any other that is not concerned
“ in furnishing the necessaries of life;
“ besides which, part of it, especially the
“ monumental, may be employed to an
“ important, moral purpose; but the
“ truth is, if the work itself be innocent,
“ the workman I hope is not account-
“ able for the abuse made of it; and as
“ the world will have not only its ne-
“ cessaries, but its *toys*, I may as well
“ be the toy-man as any other.”

Marking the indifference with which he often discoursed of his art, I once mentioned it to him, and at the same time told him a story or two which I had heard of the enthusiasm of Roubiliac; an enthusiasm which, by the bye, was never accounted a defect in an *Artist*. He answered, that, “ as he felt it not to
“ that extent, he could not express it—
“ that, if he worked on a thousand
“ blocks, they remained but dead forms—
“ that a spark of even natural life, which
“ he

“ he could not produce, seemed to exceed them all,”—and added, that, “ persons of my order might rather excite wonder, who, when they were appointed to be the means of conveying life, both spiritual and eternal, to rational creatures, were too often found talking so coolly and indifferently about it.”

One cannot wonder to hear such a man as Bacon speak thus, all things considered; since objects to us are great or small by comparison. A native of the South Seas will fix his attention upon ornaments of bones and shells, while the European, pitying his simplicity, will continue to esteem and secure his jewels. But the Scriptures teach the Christian to rise still higher; they shew him a pearl of great price, and teach him to account every thing but as loss in *comparison* of it. It is then that he looks at man as the Psalmist did* ; and

* Ps. xxxix.

finding the poverty and absolute bankruptcy of his present state, he turns to God and his word, saying, "Now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee." Like the philosopher of old, he knows he has *found* the thing he sought; and though the many may still be crying around him, "who will shew us any good?" he feels it the present reward of a sound profession, that he can cry *ευρηκα*!

"He who stands on a height," says a shrewd observer, "sees farther than those who are placed in a bottom; but let him not fancy that he shall make them believe all he sees." Superficial thinkers who heard Bacon express sentiments so remote from their own, and were unacquainted with his feeling and cheerfulness, might imagine they proceeded from insensibility or melancholy: but it would be well if they would consider that such sentiments were the natural result of a mind realising and embracing infinitely greater things.

things—things which when thus realifed to the mind, muft make that mind feel the little gems of time as comparatively insignificant; though it foberly and fcripturally refolved to preferve for them that place they ought to occupy.

Far from religious zeal, however grand its object, be the fanaticifm which would burn an Alexandrian Library, mutilate a production of genius, or attempt to remove it from the place it ought to hold among rationals. Blind fury is not christian zeal; nor tastelefs vulgarity pure religion; nor fhould the abfurditieſ which have grown upon it, like excrefcences on a beautiful human face, be affociated with its real fymmetry, as ſet forth in its ſtandard the SCRIPTURES. Let the objector ſhew any thing of this kind ſanctioned by that ſtandard, and then he will bind us either to ſhew that he miſtakes the ſenſe, or we muſt yield to the argument: againſt all ſuperſtitious or fanatical inventions in religion, we are

as ready as our opposers to protest; but perhaps, it might moderate the eagerness with which some bring forward these excrescences, if they would attend to a weighty remark of one who cannot be suspected of favouring fanaticism.

“ Whilst the infidel mocks at the superstitions of the vulgar, insults over their credulous fears, their childish errors, or fantastic rites, it does not occur to him to observe, that the most preposterous device by which the weakest devotee ever believed he was securing the happiness of a future life, is more rational, than unconcern about it. Upon this subject nothing is so absurd as indifference—no folly so contemptible, as thoughtlessness and levity*.”

But to return, I expect the sanguine Amateur will object to the sentiments which have been expressed; I know the

* Paley's Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy, Vol. II. p. 100.

subject is delicate, the treatment unpopular:

Periculosa plenum opus aleæ

Tractas; et incedis per ignes

Suppositos cineri doloso.

and I imagine I see some future offended Orator rise up, and, taking the fine arts for his subject, I hear him expatiating upon them as the ornaments of a nation—as a standard of its improvement—as not only drawing forth the powers of the mind, but as evidences of its vast capacity. He shews the multitude of individuals they support—the innocent pleasure they afford—the high patronage they have had—the immortality they have conferred—the superior taste of their admirers, the degraded minds of others, &c. &c. &c. We applaud the discourse;—we are satisfied with our fixing upon what is so truly excellent and sublime, and, pitying those

duller mortals who cannot rise superior to the notions and creeds brought from their nurseries, we cry "Let the arts flourish!"

But a little calmer consideration is necessary here: for, allowing this declamation of our orator to be a fair, yet is it a *full* statement of the matter before us? Having mentioned a farther view of the subject as expressed by my late invaluable friend, may I not, on a review, be allowed to offer a few observations in vindication of it? For as to the abuse of the arts in inflaming the passions, administering to superstition, or insulting devotion, morality, or lawful government, it is too gross to need animadversion.

If, after such warm panegyrics on the fine arts, a thinking man perceives their comparative excellence hoisted beyond its limits in the moral scale—if he observe them take such hold of the minds of their admirers that the prospect

pect is closed here—and that they have, like those of old, in veneration of meaner objects, “turned their backs to the Temple of the Lord*.”—I say IF such things be, and be observed by a Christian, and especially by a Christian Minister, ought he not to feel on such an occasion a portion of that spirit which stirred within *him* who stood on Mars-hill, and boldly reproved the blind devotions of the place?—Ought he not to address them in some such language as this?

Ye modern Athenians, devoted, like the ancients, to your idols, while HE who should be the object of your supreme regard seems an UNKNOWN GOD! The ancients demand our pity in this respect; the sparks which these children of the night struck in their moral darkness, might naturally gain *their* highest attention; they had no standard, as we have, of estimating the comparative

* Ezekiel viii, 16.

weight and worth of things; but “let
“us who are of the day be sober.”—Let
the arts live; but let not the man perish!
Let the arts flourish; but let not the
man fade; and, lost in an undue ad-
miration of their charms, be found at
length fruitless and speechless before
his Judge!

To see a guilty, dying, and respon-
sible creature — capable of enjoying
and glorifying his Maker—created for
this end, and though fallen away from
his God, yet provided with means for
returning to his favour and image—to
see such an one, having but a short
interval for accomplishing this his great-
est work, yet totally occupied and in-
fatuated by his taste for the evanescent
charms of Sculpture, Painting, Music,
&c.—wasting his only opportunity in the
admiration of shadows and sounds, while
impending and everlasting realities are
forgotten, if not despised;—to hear him
offering apologies for such a conduct,
drawn

drawn from the innocence and excellence of the objects by which he is thus blinded, bondaged, and infatuated,—is, to say the least of it, a striking and prodigious instance of his fallen and miserable condition.

Were a criminal under condemnation, and allowed but a short interval before the sentence of death was executed; and could he obtain not only pardon, but preferment, if he properly applied for these during that space of time; what should we think of the man, though in other respects sober and rational, if, instead of improving his opportunity, he wasted it in placing pictures and images round his cell, or listening to the songs of the next prisoner! And, if in addition to this, he were angry whenever his friends reminded him of the infatuation; treating their remonstrances as enthusiastic and irrational!

It is not our fond opinions and unfounded conjectures as to the propriety
or

or probability of this statement, which ought to decide in our minds as to the truth of it; but the express declarations of that Judge before whom we must all shortly stand. He has shewn ruin coming on the *neglector*, as certainly as on the opposer, of his grace. The benighted loiterer, when carried away by a flood, or perishing in a pit, will receive but small consolation that he did not waste his day in bed, but in a cabinet or concert. Nor does the snare ever become more dangerous than when reputation, splendour, and the abstract innocence and excellence of it, tend to quiet any alarm in the consciences of men.—*Perimus in licitis.*

Who shall roll for us the stone from the door of a sepulchre which entombs such multitudes! and multitudes, not of the vulgar only, but of Geniuses, of Scholars, of Politicians, and of Philosophers! Here, among other views of it, the superiority of religion appears—a superiority

city which needs not rank and talents to help out its effect. Produce ONE true disciple of our great Teacher, though the meanest, as to his natural capacity and education, yet this man, knowing his ground, cannot but feel the deepest pity for his scorers. To each insulter he might justly reply in the words of our great Poet:

Fain would I something say, yet to what end?

Thou hast nor Ear, nor Soul to apprehend

The sublime notion, and high mystery.

“I see,” says he, “that, if the gospel
“be hid, it is hid to them that are lost;
“in whom the god of this world hath
“blinded the minds of them which be-
“lieve not” — directing their attention
to some perishing frivolity or other,
“left the light of the glorious gospel
“of Christ, who is the image of God,
“should shine into them.” On the con-
trary, such a man elevated, in fact, by
his

his grasp of mind, surveys the prospect before him. He, like the Patriarch, realising the approaching danger, “pro-
“vides an Ark to the saving of his
“house”—like Moses, he is not to be
cheated with the “pleasures of sin for
“a season, but endures, seeing Him who
“is invisible”—like Abraham, he goes
forward from a shadow to a certainty.
The enchantment is broken—the lie is
detected—he feels a full conviction what
it is to “become a man, and put away
“his childish things.” Feeling his na-
tural weakness, he learns that, man must
cling in order to climb; he rises like the
feeble vine on a wall of salvation; and
thus both the rationality and superiority
of true religion is sensibly and infallibly
demonstrated, at least to his own heart.

So common is the fact, that I think
no unprejudiced observer who regards
this subject as it respects the poor, but
must have been struck with the ame-
liorating and elevating effect of true
religion

religion with respect to them. Even the most squalid wretch found among them, whose habits of stupidity, sensuality, and wild disorder, have sunk him below the brutes; such a one may be sometimes seen rising by religion into a rationality that surprises the observer. The man awakes and erects himself; he looks upward; he abstracts and compares; and acting upon his new and higher sentiments, becomes, to all intents, a true moral philosopher.

In a word, if to pursue the *best end* in the choice of the *fittest means* be a just definition of Wisdom, then, in spite of all misrepresentation, religion in exercise, like Bacon's religion, marks the truly wise man: and, to feel this wisdom bring satisfaction home to the heart—directing it to substantials, and breaking those enchantments of life which at first entice, often betray, and never could satisfy, is to rise to the character of a happy and superior man. On the
con-

contrary, for any one to represent such a principle as contracting the mind, while it actually expands and elevates it, is like asserting, that he who is capable of surveying a prospect before him, is more limited in his views and faculties than another whose purblind eye can discern nothing but what is brought close to it. Or to treat a resolution to maintain and act upon such a principle, as weak or irrational, is, as if one should affirm that, it would have been wiser if the Prodigal had determined to stay and perish with the swine, than that he should at length have "*come to himself*," and returned to his Father.

"Still," says the objector, "Do I not see religionists gloomy, contracted, superstitious, and sometimes false?" Look again at the remarks on the identity of sound religious principle, and the accidents which tend to obscure it, and your objection is answered.—"But if Bacon rose superior to these in cheerfulness
"and

“and liberality, were not his sentiments rather cynical and monkish respecting the arts?”—Not at all.—Had he been more independant and unencumbered, I cannot doubt but that both his taste and his conscience would have agreed in placing an organ, a painted window, or a monument, in his church, in adding a few select pieces to his collection; in increasing the portraits of his friends; in turning his garden walk; or in directing the style of his alcove.—“Where then did he differ from the generality of those whom he saw come to him as an artist?” I reply, he differed, *toto cælo*: he would have treated these momentary trifles, to use his own expression, but as his “toys,” while his *treasure*, and consequently his heart, would have been in heaven.

I have to apologize to the Reader for having carried these reflections to a far greater length than I intended. But if they illustrate and recommend the
piety

piety of the character presented—if they in any degree atone for the great waste of my own life in the pursuit of sounds and shadows—if they warn some youth against the charms preparing on the continent,

Baited with reasons not unplaufible,
To wind into the eafy-hearted man,
And hug him into fnares.

—if, finally, while the light is obfcured by the fmoke of that incenfe which afcends on all fides to the idol of the day, my feeble efforts may be accepted with his, who cried, “ If Baal be God, ferve “ him; but if Jehovah be God, ferve “ him;” I fhall rejoice in having made them, however they may be mifunderftood or misrepresented.

FINIS.

NOTES.

[Note A. Being a specimen of the fables and epitaphs, mentioned page 57.]

THE MIRROR AND THE PICTURE,

A FABLE.

A MIRROR placed in a Painter's study, thus vaunted itself against a DESIGN on the Easel: "Can you," says the Mirror, "covered with blots and scratches, pretend to vie with ME, who exhibit so precise an image of every thing that comes before me! and where the variety is as great, as the resemblance is exact!"—"I grant," replies the Canvas, "that all my excellence consists in faithfully returning whatever is committed to my charge; but it might serve as a check to your pride to consider, that, after you have been the companion of the wisest and best of characters, you are ready to admit a Fool, or embrace a Harlot."

MORAL.

The same objects and events which the superficial suffer to pass without a trace left behind, become a fund of knowledge to the diligent; which, being enriched with principle, and fixed by habit, they stand among mankind a repository of all that is wise, and an example of all that is good.

EPITAPHS.

On one who had been a Profligate.

SATAN's captive, long enchain'd,
All the viler passions reign'd;
From this tyranny releas'd,
Say not, "*Miracles are ceas'd.*"

On a pious Youth.

PRECIOUS plant of heavenly grace,
Waiting here a little space,
While the wintry months forlorn
Pass, and Spring's sweet gales return;
Then beneath propitious skies,
Thou in living bloom shalt rise.

On — .

WHY write we Genius, Truth, or Sense,
Or Taste, or Wit, or Eloquence,
Or Christian Virtues on this Stone!—
Thy Name includes them every one.

MR. B.'S REMARKS ON SCULPTURE.

From Dr. Rees's Edition of Chambers's Dictionary,

As mentioned in the MEMOIRS, p. 56.

(B.)

“IT is probable that *sculpture* is more ancient than painting; and if we examine the style of ancient painting, there is reason to conclude, that *sculpture* stood first in the public esteem; as the ancient painters have evidently imitated the statuaries, even to their disadvantage; since their works have not that freedom of style, more especially with respect to their composition and drapery, which the pencil might easily acquire to a greater degree than that of the chisel; but as this is universally the case, it cannot be attributed to any thing else besides the higher estimation of the works on which they formed themselves.

“Which is the more difficult art has been a question often agitated. Painting has the greatest number of requisites, but at the same time her expedients are the most numerous; and, therefore, we may venture to affirm, that, whenever *sculpture* pleases equally with a painting, the sculptor is certainly the greatest artist. *Sculpture* has indeed had the honour of giving law to

all the schools of design, both ancient and modern, with respect to purity of form. The reason, perhaps, is, that being divested of those meretricious ornaments by which painting is enabled to seduce its admirers, it is happily forced to seek for its effect in the higher excellencies of the art: hence elevation in the idea, as well as purity and grandeur in the forms, are found in greater perfection in *sculpture* than in painting.

“ Besides, whatever may be the original principles which direct our feelings in the approbation of intrinsic beauty, they are, without doubt, very much under the influence of association. Custom and habit will necessarily give a false bias to our judgment: it is, therefore, natural, and in some measure reasonable, that those arts which are temporaneous, should adapt themselves to the changes of fashion, &c. But *sculpture*, by its durability, and consequent application to works of perpetuity, is obliged to acquire and maintain the essential principles of beauty and grandeur, that its effect on the mind may be preserved through the various changes of mental taste.

“ It is conceived, that it will scarcely admit of a question, whether the ancients or moderns have most excelled in this art; the palm having been so universally adjudged to the former. To determine in what proportion they are superior is too difficult an attempt. Wherever there is a real superiority in any art or science, it will in time be discovered; but the world,
ever

ever fond of excess, never stops at the point of true judgment, but dresses out its favourite object with the ornaments of fancy, so that even every blemish becomes a beauty. This it has done by ancient *sculpture* to such a degree as not to form its judgment of *that* by any rules, but to form an opinion of *rules* by the example. As long as this is the case, modern art can never have a fair comparison with the ancient. This partiality to the ancients is so strong as to prevent almost all discrimination; and is the sole reason, why many antiques, that now stand as patterns of beauty in the judgment of most connoisseurs, are not discovered to be copies. This is not more important than it is easy to be perceived by a judicious eye; for wherever there is a grandeur or elegance to an eminent degree in the idea and general composition of a statue, and when the execution of the parts (called by artists the treating of the parts) betrays a want of taste and feeling, there is the greatest reason to conclude, that the statue is a copy, though we were ever so certain of its antiquity. And surely if evidence of a picture's being a copy proportionably diminishes its value, the same rule of judgment may be no less properly applied to a statue. Modern and ancient art can never, therefore, be fairly compared, till both are made to submit to the determination of reason and nature. It may be observed, that the ancients have chiefly confined themselves to the sublime and beautiful;

ful; and whenever a pathetic subject has come before them, they have sacrificed expression to beauty. The famous group of Niobe is one instance of this kind; and, therefore, however great our partiality to the ancients may be, none can hesitate to affirm, that, whenever the moderns shall unite great expression with great beauty, they will wrest the palm out of their hands."

Dr. Rees adds, "The Editor is indebted for the preceding ingenious remarks to Mr. Bacon, an artist of very distinguished eminence in his profession."

From Dallaway's Anecdotes of the Arts in England,

As mentioned in the MEMOIRS, p. 17.

(C.)

"THE works of Bacon, Banks, Nollekins, Wilton, and Flaxman, will rescue the present age from being totally indebted to foreigners for perfection in statuary. His present majesty at Christchurch, a bust, by the *first* mentioned, has the strength of Bernini."

"In the Hall at All Souls is a Statue of Judge Blackstone, sitting and habited in his magistratical character, which is indeed full of spirit and dignity. It commands attention, and expresses importance. But the question respecting the costume will occur to most spectators; and Bacon imposed a hard task upon himself

himself when he undertook such a profusion of wig and ermine. Perhaps, so rigid an adherence to verisimilitude may be in most instances relaxed, with happier effect, if not totally dispensed with. Nothing however between an exact representation of the dress of the times and the true antique, should be admitted in statuary. Kent's fancy dress for Shakespear in Westminster Abbey, and of the Duke of Somerset at Cambridge, habited as if he had lived in the reign of Charles the First, are incorrect. In St. Paul's Cathedral the statues of Johnson and Howard, both by Bacon, are in opposite styles. The Philosopher is in the habit of an Athenian, gigantic, rather than colossal, whilst the head of the Philanthropist is dressed like that of a gentleman of our own times——But the full dress of an English Judge has insuperable disadvantages; and few artists would have succeeded so well as Bacon."

"At Christchurch are busts of General Guise, Archbishop Robinson, Bishop Barrington, &c. and at Pembroke College one of Dr. Johnson, all by Bacon, and elaborately finished. For a very memorable improvement in sepulchral statuary we are indebted to him. The idea of representing the virtues of the deceased by symbolical figures, if not original, is well applied."

"Bacon has adopted this mode very happily, though not without repetition of his first thoughts; and has attained to nearly an equal degree of perfection

tion in several of his emblematical figures, which are seen in Westminster Abbey, the Abbey church at Bath, and Bristol Cathedral, where his monument to Mrs. Elizabeth Draper (Sterne's Eliza) is exquisitely simple."

"One of Bacon's last works was a monument for Mr. Whitbread, which is a beautiful composition. His figure of Benevolence is again introduced, with a variation only in the attitude. It is well worthy the antique.—But another marble, scarcely finished at the time of his death, will secure him a lasting fame for originality and classical taste. It is the Cœnotaph lately erected at Westminster Abbey to the poet Maſon. A Muſe holding his profile on a medallion, reclines on an antique altar, on which are sculptured, in relief, a lyre, the tragic maſque, and laurel wreath; all of the moſt correct form, as ſeen on ancient ſarco-phagi of the pure ages—"

"Bacon's monument to the poet Gray is due to the claffical deſign of his friend Maſon. That to Lord Chatham certainly diſplays a very grand group. The Britannia is the Urbs Roma, and the Thames is the Tiber of the Capitol, copied with the appropriate variation of the attributes. The monument to Lord R. Manners exhibits the antique Neptune."

"With the Engliſh ſchool of Sculpture, founded by Bacon, Banks, Nollekins, and Wilton, no nation, excepting Italy, will offer a ſucceſſful competition."

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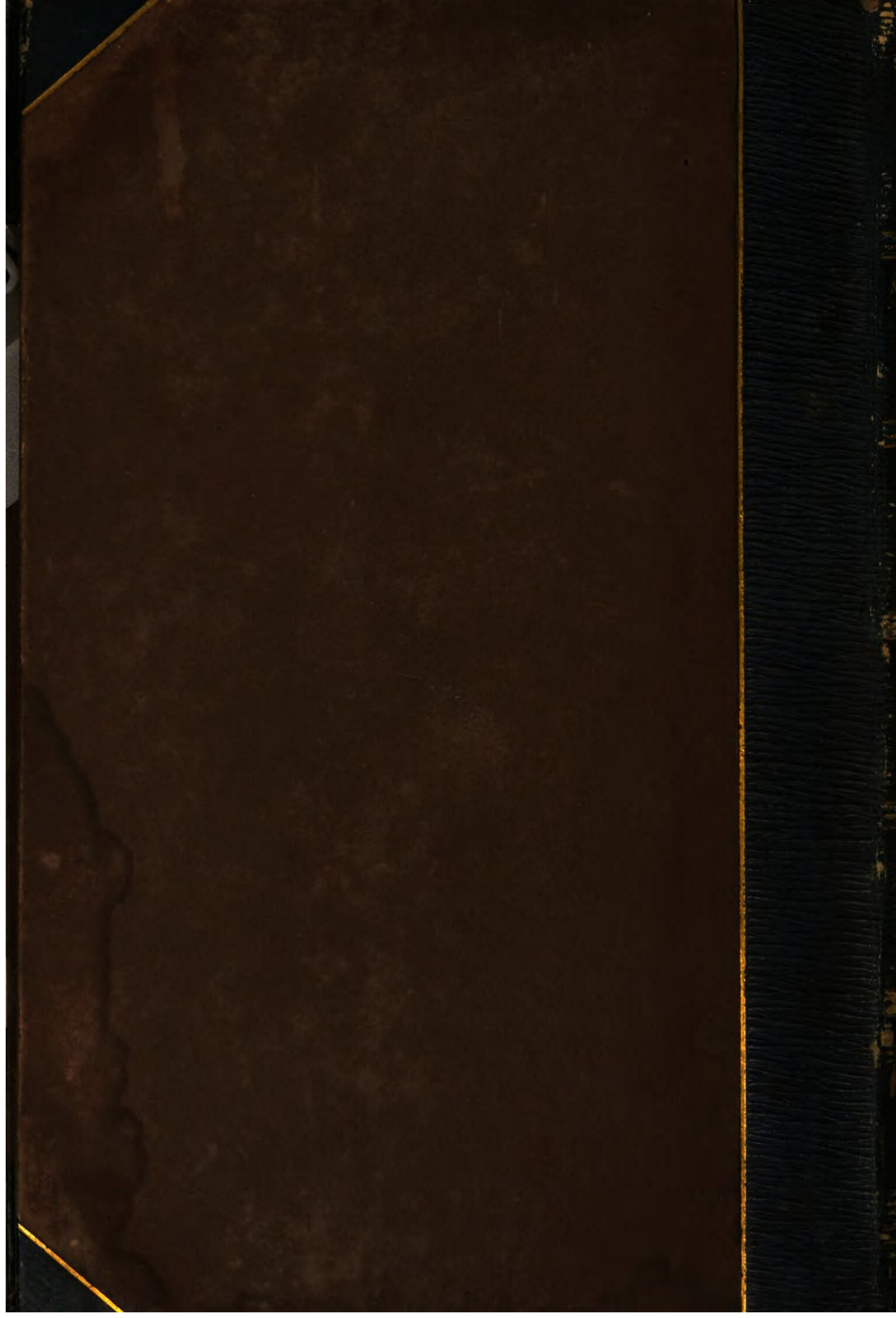
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